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ABSTRACT

This publication of the California Governor's Committee on Child Development Programs focuses on the Alternative Child Care Program in California (AB 3059). The report looks back over four years of the AB 3059, reviews the goals of that legislation, and measures the program's accomplishments against those goals. In early 1976, the Governor's office set forth its proposal for the growth of child development programs in the state. At the same time, parents and providers indicated the need to broaden the system delivering those services. The results of these efforts was AB 3059, which included a $10 million appropriation for new child care programs. The purposes of AB 3059 were to (1) test cost-reducing features and delivery methods, (2) promote parental choice, (3) address unmet geographic needs, (4) encourage community level coordination, and (5) offer replicable features. The $10 million was devoted to the following areas: family day care homes and networks, center-based group care and innovative programs, vendor payments, resource and referral programs, minor capital outlay, support to the Governor's Advisory Committee on Child Development Programs, program administration, and an independent comparative evaluation of the AB 3059. Following an assessment of the strengths and the unanticipated rewards in each of the above areas, the report details the many ways in which the AB 3059 experience informed and shaped Senator Sieroty's SB 863. (Author/MP)

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AB 3059

a report to the governor on the alternative child care programs, 1976-80

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State of California
GOVERNOR'S OFFICE
SACRAMENTO 95814

EDMUND G. BROWN JR.
GOVERNOR

916/445-2841

Last year, according to census reports, fifty-seven percent of American women worked outside the home. Almost seventy percent of them worked full time. These statistics emphasize the need for a creative system of child care which can begin to meet the growing need.

As limitations on the state's fiscal resources constrain our ability to expand traditional programs, we must seek program innovations and alternative approaches to providing child care. My Alternative Child Care Program, enacted into law by Assembly Bill 3059 (1976), is an attempt to seek out new, cost efficient ways of providing care. The demonstrations funded through this program have shown the value of non-traditional approaches such as: vouchers designed to increase parental choice, expansion of private nursery school programs, subsidization of individual family day care homes, and strengthening the resources and referral systems.

The Governor's Advisory Committee on Child Development Programs should be congratulated on the impressive job it has done in documenting the results of the demonstrations. Together, we have taken a bold step to provide new directions for child care in California.

Sincerely,

Edmund G. Brown Jr.

EDMUND G. BROWN JR.
Governor

State of California

GOVERNOR'S ADVISORY COMMITTEE
ON CHILD DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS
915 Capitol Mall, Room 260
Sacramento, California 95814
(916) 322-8181

November 1, 1980

Honorable Edmund G. Brown, Jr.
Governor of the State of California

Dear Governor Brown:

The Governor's Advisory Committee on Child Development Programs has authorized me to submit to you our final report on the Alternative Child Care Program (AB 3059/76). We are pleased to have been given a role in this important set of new ventures in child development.

The passage and signing of Senator Sieroty's Child Care and Development Services Act of 1980 (SB 863) incorporates the Alternative Child Care Programs into the mainstream of California's child care services. The end of the experiment gives the Committee the opportunity to look back over the program's four year history, to celebrate its successes, and to point out the ways in which AB 3059 has altered the system of which it is now a part.

Here, then, is some latter-day applause for you and for the parents, providers, and legislators who designed and conducted this experiment.

Sincerely,

June Sale
Chairperson

Introduction

In 1976, AB 3059--The Alternative Child Care Program--offered bold directions for the growth of child care in California. From 1943 to 1972, there was little change in government supported child care: public schools administered child care programs for the children of working parents, heirs to the factory jobs held by women during World War II. In 1945, then-Superintendent of Public Instruction, Roy Simpson, wrote,

> The welfare of these children, their nutritional health, and personal needs soon made it evident that the quality of the care and training given them was a matter of first importance. It was natural, therefore, that the public schools of California administer the program.

Mr. Simpson's analysis remained State policy for nearly thirty years.

This long commitment to one mode of care provided continuity, it provided a context for professional growth and interchange among the teachers in these public school programs, and it created and promoted a two-track system of publicly-supported care in public institutions and of parent-supported care in private centers and family day care homes.

In 1970, with AB 750, a different approach began within publicly-supported care: child care could be administered by the State Department of Education, yet not necessarily be operated by the public schools. In 1972, the Legislature strengthened this approach with AB 99. Through AB 750 and AB 99, some community-based programs, almost all of them administered by nonprofit corporations or by city governments, received funds from the Department of Education to operate day care programs; and, the Department of Education became the monitor of county welfare departments' Title XX child care expenditures.

Four years later, with AB 3059, those first steps of AB 750 and AB 99 led to major departures from past delivery systems. These new directions in child care corresponded to social changes of major proportion: more and more women entered the labor force, more and more single persons became parents, and increasing numbers of married parents became single parents. The pressure on State government to expand child care services was extensive, and the pressure to deliver new or different services was strong as well. AB 3059 marked the State's full-fledged recognition of both the changing social forces and the new kinds of subsidized care and services available.

The departures of AB 3059--from California's traditional subsidized child care (1943-72) and even the new agencies funded by AB 750 and AB 99--were several:

- Resource and referral agencies, which did not provide direct care and which provided services to all parents, no matter what their income.

- Alternative (vendor/voucher) payment agencies, which could provide choices among programs to eligible parents.
- Family day care associations and networks, which had heretofore been outside the State's subsidized system except in rare instances.
- Private, proprietary centers, which also had operated, for the most part, outside the subsidized system.
- Minor capital outlay grants, available to assist agencies to bring potential day care centers and homes up to licensing standards.

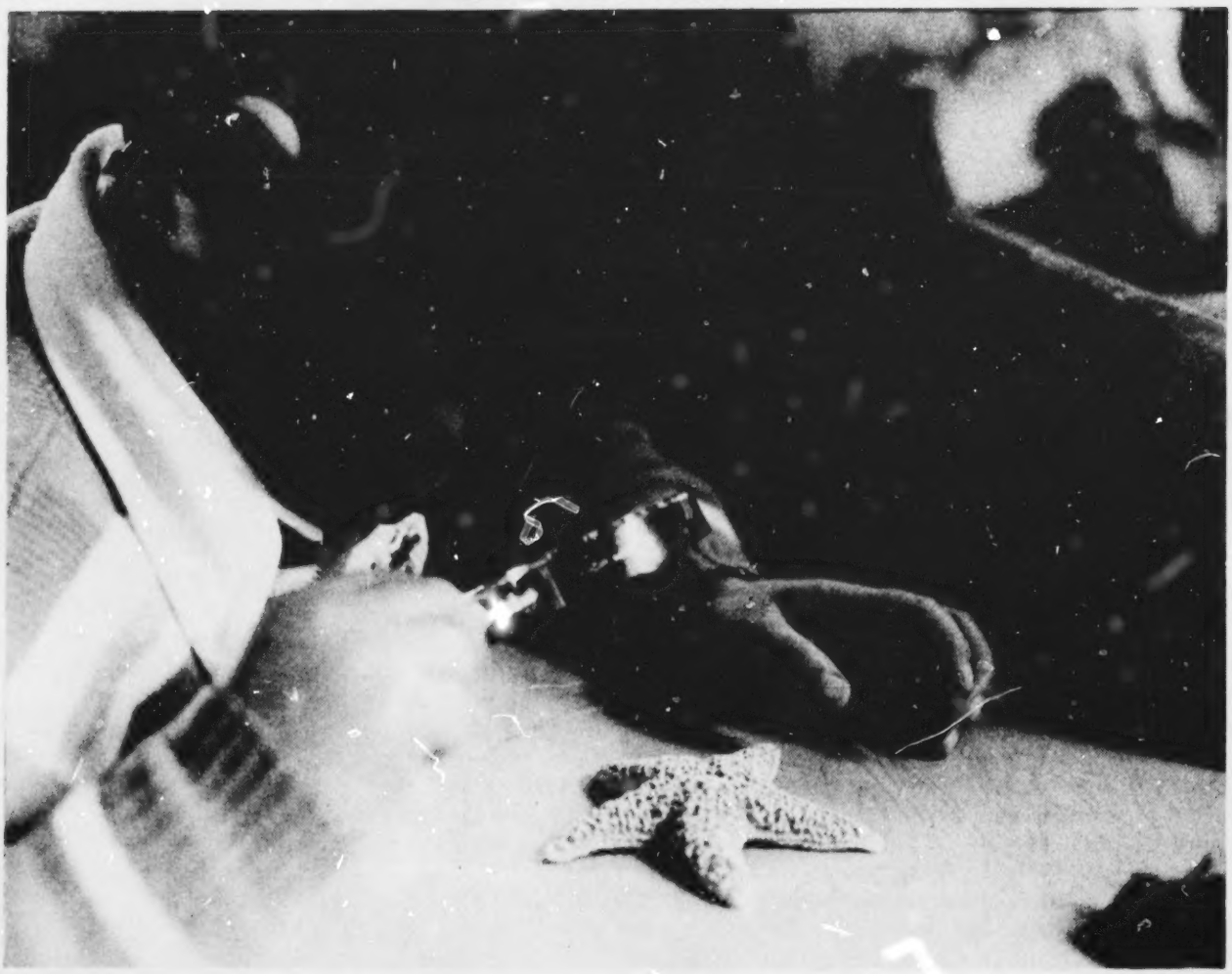
Almost all of these departures were nascent in AB 750 and AB 99 and in the State Department of Education contracts with county welfare departments: county welfare departments ran vendor payment programs, a few 4-C's did resource and referral work, and one or two family day care networks had State funds. But here, in AB 3059, they came consciously to the fore as alternatives to the fully-subsidized public school and nonprofit centers of traditional and AB 99 child care. The departures of AB 3059 were significant, and they were, in the main, successful.

AB 3059, however, is not the last word in California child care. Not all of the alternatives are viable in every community in the State; the traditional programs hold an essential place in the State's network; some aspects of AB 3059 are less successful or less replicable than others; and, of course, a great deal must continue to happen in California before all eligible children will receive child care of high quality, before parents will have real choices, before parents have an important say in the policies of their children's programs, and before child care is understood by society as an enterprise separate from "welfare."

Yet, AB 3059 changed the whole character of subsidized care in California. It introduced and sustained a process which continues to be vital in child care policy; it brought the private sector into the subsidized field and held up to scrutiny the long-held division of California children onto two child care tracks; it gave family day care a share of State funding and a place in the professional sun; it provided forums for public discussions of day care policy; and it reflected social trends in the late 70's which were not present ten years before.

Child care in California is complex; it probably neither can nor should be simplified. In 1979 and 1980, the Legislature, the Departments of Education and Social Services, the child care field, and the Governor's Office brought the traditional, the nonprofit, and the alternative programs together under one piece of legislation. A reading of Senator Sieroty's SB 863 (Chapter 798 of the Statutes of 1980) demonstrates some of the complexity of subsidized care in California. The influence AB 3059 has had upon the State's subsidized system should also be clear to readers of that bill. The departures of AB 3059 are well traveled now. There are new challenges of equity, of local priority setting, of expanding care within work places, and of expanding options for care to the children of middle-income parents. AB 3059 has little to say about some of these issues, but the process for discovering alternatives remains.

This report looks back over the four years of the Alternative Child Care Programs, reviews the goals of that legislation, measures the programs' accomplishments against those goals, and details the many ways in which the AB 3059 experiences informed and shaped Senator Sieroty's SB 863. In this report we salute Governor Brown for being sensitive in 1975 and 1976 both to changing social conditions and to new ideas in child care, such as resource and referral programs and alternative payment programs. We salute Senator Sieroty, Assemblyman Bill Lockyer, and the 1980 Legislators for enacting SB 863 with its major incorporation of the Alternative Child Care Programs into the mainstream of subsidized care; and we salute the staff and parents in the Alternative Child Care Programs who took roads less traveled by--choosing them has made all the difference.



the Alternatives

From the first days of his Administration, Governor Edmund G. Brown, Jr. emphasized the need to expand the State's subsidized child care system in new and innovative ways. In early 1976, the Governor's Office set forth its proposal for the growth of child development programs in the State. At the same time, parents and providers indicated the need to broaden the system delivering those services. The result of these two efforts was AB 3059 (Foran), which included a $10 million appropriation for new child care programs.

The purposes of AB 3059 were to:

- Test cost reducing features and delivery methods
- Promote parental choice
- Address unmet geographic needs
- Encourage community level coordination
- Offer replicable features

The $10 million was appropriated in the following ways to reach the program's goals:

- $3 million for family day care homes and networks
- $2,225,000 for center based group care and innovative programs
- $3 million for vendor payments, to maximize parental choice
- $900,000 for resource and referral programs
- $500,000 for minor capital outlay, to bring centers and homes up to licensing code requirements
- $25,000 to support the Governor's Advisory Committee on Child Development Programs
- $250,000 for the Department of Education for program administration
- $100,000 for an independent comparative evaluation

In the following sections, we can look at each of the eight aspects given funds in AB 3059, connect each to the purposes of AB 3059, and evaluate the strengths and the unanticipated rewards of each.

Pilar Ramos with her family day care group in San Francisco. (Photo by Norisa Berardi.)

Family Day Care

Before 1976, family day care was, at most, only on the outer fringes of subsidized care in California. Some might say it was excluded from the directly-subsidized system completely. In AB 3059, family day care homes were seen as both a route to increase parental choice and a potential cost-reducing delivery method. A part of the lower cost is the limted need for facility renovation or construction: the State could provide subsidized care through family day care homes without needing to construct new sites.

By 1979, family day care homes served 11% of the children in subsidized care in the State. They provide an even larger percentage of the subsidized infant care. The growth of subsidized infant care and of care in family day care homes has been in tandem. For those who have viewed child care as primarily a socializing experience, the involvement of family day care in serving subsidized children has been most important and natural. Where family day care has flourished, parents have had the options of home environments. Through family day care homes, another goal of AB 3059 was partially realized: this mechanism works easily in areas which are economically mixed, and it works well in suburban areas where homes more easily meet licensing standards than might city houses or apartments.

Baby, mirror, and changing table at Grace Day Home in Sacramento.

One other note on AB 3059 is instructive here: the legislation envisioned extensive use of satellite systems--family day care homes linked to a children's center. Through the network, the resources of the center would be available to family day care homes. The growth of this delivery system has not been as great, however, as the increasing numbers of homes connecting to the subsidized system through alternative (vendor/voucher) payment programs. For whatever reasons--paperwork, lack of centers interested, lack of homes interested--the satellite system has not become the principal entree for family day care providers with subsidized care, although it has proved workable and deserves continued support.

While family day care may remain a stepsister in California's subsidized system, through AB 3059 she at least sleeps indoors and eats at the table.

Center Care

The centers funded through AB 3059 were primarily seen in the legislation as potentially cost-reducing programs, less expensive than the centers funded by AB 99. The program variations for centers allowable and encouraged in AB 3059 included these potentially cost-reducing features:

- modifying child staff ratios
- modifying child teacher ratios
- expanding use of volunteers
- increasing coordination and use of local resources

Throughout the act, it was also the implicit hope that the 3059 programs would attract applications from private proprietary programs. By waiving the Title 5 child-adult and child-teacher ratios, AB 3059 invited applications from proprietary programs operating under Title 22 of the State Administrative Code. (The educational requirements for caregivers and the child-adult ratios are somewhat less stringent in Title 22 than in Title 5.) Fewer classroom adults who are paid at a lower standard amounts to two significant cost-saving features.

A child at the Tulare County toy lending library.

However, three aspects of the bill and one social current worked against a significant number of proprietary agencies applying for center based funding through AB 3059. One of those features was positive: proprietary programs found it easier and in some cases more attractive to ally themselves with a vendor payment program rather than seek a direct contract with the State Department of Education. The second was negative: if the program sought a direct contract, then it could not collect the same fee from the State that it collected from full fee-paying families. That item called "profit" was disallowed and subtracted from the reimbursement. Yet, these same programs, through the vendor payment arrangement, could collect their regular fee from a vendor payment organization; so, few applied for direct contracts. The third deterrent was increased paperwork caused by the State's demands for fiscal accountability.

The social current working against proprietary agencies receiving a significant amount of the AB 3059 center based program dollars was pure and simply the overriding need for child care in low income communities in the State, particularly in cities. In 1976, the AB 3059 money was the only expansion money available. All of the community based organizations that thought in terms of traditional day care centers--and that served people in communities with few if any licensed family day care homes--looked to this $2,250,000 as their best chance for funding. These programs were identical to the nonprofit community based programs funded through AB 99 several years before. The programs served subsidized children almost exclusively; their staff members were child development professionals with permits or credentials. They were also new programs--either new agencies starting from scratch with AB 3059 funds or previously-subsidized agencies opening programs at new sites. They differ greatly from the traditional proprietary programs--which tend to have an owner operator assisted by young employees who work in the day care program for a short time; these programs, if funded by AB 3059, would have enrolled some subsidized children to provide a mix of economic backgrounds in the center.

The outside comparative evaluation of the AB 3059 centers found virtually no difference in the educational background of the staff, the adult-child and teacher-child ratios used in the center, and the amount of support services made available to the children and the families when compared to programs operated under the general child care act. But this finding should come as no surprise to anyone who took stock of where the 3059 center based funding went in the first place.

Wu Yee Children's Center, San Francisco.

While this may seem to amount to a failure within AB 3059, it presents, on close scrutiny, two significant positive findings: the need for the traditional center-based model continues, and the ratio of 1 adult for 7 or 8 children seems to be the happy medium. While the 3059 centers were allowed to go to a 1:12 adult-child ratio, most came to 1:7 and 1:8 early in their development. These ratios have since become the federal and state standards for preschool children in subsidized day care.

Vendor Payments

In this part of AB 3059, the hopes for promoting parental choice, for addressing unmet geographic needs, and for including both family day care homes and proprietary centers were fully met. In many ways, the vendor payment programs were the ideal alternative: they placed children in facilities already licensed through the Department of Social Services under Title 22 regulations. The fees of these programs were set in the marketplace and usually were affordable to middle-class parents. Therefore they promoted economic integration when they included subsidized children, and, as noted above, they included many proprietary and family day care programs. By 1979, 1,205 private programs included subsidized children through the vendor payment mechanism.

Vendor payment programs were able to address unmet geographic needs in particular kinds of areas: in rural areas where towns or small cities have a family day care association or a few private centers, subsidized children can be served easily in these communities without the need to open a center that must serve at least 25 or 30 to generate an average daily enrollment that covers administrative costs. Also, in suburban areas such as the San Fernando Valley, where low-income families live in pockets of poverty within larger communities of middle class families, the vendor payment mechanism allows these children to be integrated into on-going early childhood programs rather than segragating them in one center serving 100% subsidized children. The vendor payment programs are less effective in areas where there are few licensed family day care providers or proprietary centers such as urban areas with a high density of very poor families.

As a cost-reducing delivery system, vendor payment agencies showed great promise. First of all, they utilized existing licensed facilities, thereby circumventing the need for capital investment. Also, as noted above, the typical proprietary center has an owner operator and a staff of young employees paid at or near the minimum wage. This is, of course, a significantly less costly program than a program in which the staff is paid relatively equally, or, as in the case of a few public school programs, the staff is paid at the wage of a K-12 teacher. Also contributing to the lower cost of a proprietary center is its greater number of children per adult. Vendor payment programs pay the providers the rate the providers charge to full fee paying families. This is a substantially lower rate than the average in the State for fully subsidized center based programs. On top of this fee, of course, is the percentage the vendor payment agency needs for administration. Thus, in all cases, a subsidized child will cost slightly more than a full fee paying child because of the costs incurred in administering the vendor payment, accounting, and accountability.

Karen Kavanagh puts parents and providers in touch with local support services. (Photo by Norisa Berardi, Childcare Switchboard, San Francisco.)

However, at the present time we are unsure of the amount of support services made available to the subsidized children in these programs. The comparative evaluation funded through AB 3059 found that very little referral for support services takes place through the family day care homes or the centers into which children are placed through vendor payment programs. One hopes that an increasing number of vendor payment agencies provide these referrals and support services themselves through their administrative function.

Several of the strongest aspects of the vendor payment programs were not anticipated in 1976. Many of the applicant agencies decided to allow the subsidy to follow the family rather than to remain with a specific center or family day care program. So when a child grows older and leaves an infant program for preschool or goes from preschool to after-school care (or when a family moves but stays within the service area of the vendor payment program), the subsidy follows the child to a new center or family day care home more appropriate to the child's age or the family's address. This practice gives families the support of subsidized child care over several year's time--a time long enough, one hopes, for them to become economically self-sufficient and less in need of subsidized care. Thus, the concept of parental choice extends beyond the family's simple choosing of the child's first child care placement. It extends to the family's ability to choose among providers as its needs change.

Resource & Referral

These programs, which have grown swiftly to serve more than 90% of the State's population, are another of AB 3059's stellar successes. These programs have at their heart the promotion of parental choice, the encouragement of community level coordination, and the promotion of growth of child care services. The first of these accomplishments was the original goal of resource and referral services. They were envisioned as assisting parents to find care swiftly. Also, they differed from other State programs in that their services were available to all families regardless of income. An unexpected product of these programs was their ability to promote the growth of care through the assistance they gave to persons who wanted to enter the child care field, who were seeking a family day care license, or who wanted to organize new center based care--be it subsidized or nonsubsidized. The resource and referral agencies also swiftly became the source of information on unmet needs in given communities in the State. The local resource and referral agency is now most likely to provide information on demographic patterns throughout a county, distribution of subsidized and nonsubsidized child care, and the specific kinds of demands for care which parents articulate, e.g., the need for infant care, the need for bilingual care, and the need for care for handicapped children.

Child care referral and resource center at Bananas in Oakland.

One part of AB 3059 was to test cost-reducing features. Resource and referral agencies, in an unforeseen, delightful, and surprising way, delivered one: in their local stimulation of new child care services and their articulation of local needs, they brought other dollars into child care besides State general fund money. Resource and referral agencies have promoted foundation grants for child care, city and county commitments of HUD block grants and revenue sharing funds for children's services, and corporate contributions to meet employees' child care needs. Marjorie Wyatt, the Chair of Wilson Riles's Child Development Commission, observed that if no one else in a community receives State dollars, resource and referral agencies should--precisely to stimulate these other supports for child care services.

Minor Capital Outlay

This feature of AB 3059 proved to be a most difficult one to manage; and, the Legislature did not appropriate capital outlay funds after the original 1976-77 appropriation until SB 863 in 1980. The initial $500,000 appropriation did not, it seems, result in a significant increase in the amount of licensed care available to subsidized children. The funds were badly needed, but the legislation and its administration blocked the funds' accessibility in several ways:

- The application for these funds had to come through a public agency.
- Public agencies were reluctant to utilize these funds to improve private facilities because of fears of insurance liability.
- The State was unclear about its residual claims on property (e.g., doors, fences, toilets) purchased with these funds.

Based in part on the 1976-77 AB 3059 capital outlay experience, SB 863 (1980) includes a very detailed set of mechanisms for making capital outlay funds available to child care providers.

Just as Piaget predicts, we learn as much or more from problems we don't immediately solve as we learn from simple challenges.

the GAC

The $25,000 appropriated to the Governor's Advisory Committee in 1976-77 permitted the Committee to do a thorough study of the initial year of the AB 3059 programs. That study issued in July of 1977 was of great importance

in supporting and, in some cases, instituting changes that the Department of Education made in its administration of these alternative programs. The introduction and summary of that report are reproduced on page 15 of this report. Through AB 3059, and the Governor's reconstitution of much of the Committee's membership at that time, the rejuvenated Governor's Advisory Committee went on to become a forum for citizen review of child development policy and for citizen reflection on possible new directions for that policy.

SDE Administration

The original $250,000 administrative appropriation (2.5%) proved inadequate to the demands of administering the many new and distinct child care programs which emerged from AB 3059. In fact, this bill with its many new demands upon the Department of Education may have been the first in a series of Budget Act items and bills--culminating with SB 863--which have overloaded the Department's administrative responsibilities without providing adequate funding.

In the past sixteen months, two major changes have reorganized the Office of Child Development's provision of consultant services: the regionalization of these services and the separation of compliance review (of space and budgets) and technical assistance (for programs).

Comparative Evaluation

The evaluation conducted by Abt Associates was published in the spring of 1979, based on information gathered through the first couple of months following the passage of Proposition 13. The evaluation was of a much smaller scale than that originally envisioned: only the AB 3059 center-based programs were studied in any depth, and their comparison to some general child care center based programs makes up the only real comparative part of the evaluation. The study found that children were served as well in AB 3059 center based programs as in general child care programs--with approximately the same or a slightly higher ratio of children to adults, by staff with approximately the same educational background as those in general child care centers, and, through referral, with adequate support services. Costs were lower in the alternative child care centers because staff were paid less, there were slightly fewer adults for groups of children, and support services were provided through referral rather than directly.

INTRODUCTION

Significant successes can be found in the AB 3059, or Alternative Child Care, Program and certainly the Governor's Advisory Committee (GAC) on Child Development Programs has noted them — in this Report, and elsewhere. But the failures, or weaknesses, are of equal value for what they tell us about the prospects for being able to design an adequate program to meet a need which is generally misunderstood and only partially defined. In other words, the problems in the AB 3059 program are the problems in child care under any auspice until the public purpose in providing child care at all has been clarified.

This Report is critical of the Office of Child Development's (OCD) administrative performance in AB 3059, and includes recommendations for improving the State's administrative support of the program. OCD has demonstrated an early receptivity to the GAC's recommendations -- even in draft form — by already beginning to reduce the accounting and reporting requirements. This commendable display of cooperation harbingers a more orderly and responsive program of technical assistance to the grantees during the second year.

OCD "takes the heat" for the unanswered questions and unresolved problems in AB 3059. In a sense, however, OCD is merely performing a bureaucratic responsibility created for it by the Governor and the State Legislature — and does so under the severe limitations caused by the Legislature's allowing only 2½% for administration.

Few tasks in our public life are more rigorously demanding than the statement of policy and the setting of commonly-held priorities. These are decisions the body politic must make. The Office of Child Development cannot reasonably be held ultimately responsible if the needs of children in California go unmet. Nor can the Governor, nor the State Legislature. The distractions which prevent the needs of children from receiving the attention, study, and soul-searching of the people of this State are what stand between existing resources and the appropriate use of them. And the responsibility to remove or otherwise overcome those distractions rests with us all.

What follows is the story of the first year in California's Alternative Child Care Program — its strengths and weaknesses — as perceived by the Governor's Advisory Committee on Child Development Programs. May the issues raised herein be laid to rest only when all California children have been enfranchised to receive the best our adult population has to offer in conquering malnutrition, ignorance, discrimination, and ennui.

SUMMARY

POSITIVE PROGRAM RESULTS. The participation of community-based organizations made possible the provision of child care in areas where no services had been available previously. Community control over the program design promotes greater program adaptability to families' needs and increases the public awareness of child care needs in general throughout the community. The necessity to seek voluntary resources led to the building of many bridges between local officials, community professionals and the providers.

NEGATIVE PROGRAM RESULTS. The accounting and reporting requirements imposed on AB 3059 grantees were inappropriate for an innovative program, particularly one which encouraged the participation of small, nonprofit, community-based organizations. Program emphasis and even program design were frequently affected by these requirements, as well as by an inflexibly administered system of reimbursement. Small programs — especially small new programs — could not absorb the heavy, unanticipated administrative costs.

GENERAL ADMINISTRATIVE PROBLEMS. Rigid State fiscal policies frequently obstructed success in this experiment; new programs desperately needed start-up time and money, but their needs were not accommodated. The cost-competitive feature of AB 3059 promoted exploitation of child care professionals and prevented realistic budget planning and negotiations. Another problem stemming from unexamined application of State regulations was the return to the General Fund of nearly $1,000,000 unexpended during the first year of AB 3059; while this makes sense from the State's fiscal management point of view, the providers lost funding to which they were entitled, because the demonstration project was not funded from the beginning for the full statutory period of three years. Capital outlay is another example of conflicting policies; because the legal intricacies had not been worked out in advance, capital outlay payments were not made until May, 1977. Finally, the State Department of Health showed no interest in mobilizing local resources for health screening and other medical services.

OCD'S ADMINISTRATIVE PERFORMANCE. Poor communications from and with OCD caused confusion, frustration, and hundreds of extra hours of administrative work among the AB 3059 grantees. Incomplete and changing administrative directives and guidelines exacerbated the problem. Program providers met with only partial success in their efforts to participate in OCD's program design and development processes, as well as to secure timely information on allocation of new resources. And many providers felt they received inadequate technical assistance from inadequately trained OCD consultants.

Graphics by Brian Duffy,
Pencraft Design, Sacramento.

The study, in retrospect, is disappointing because it virtually ignored the alternative payment program, family day care, and resource and referral agencies. This study evaluated neither the extent to which parental choice increased in communities nor the extent to which unmet geographic needs were addressed by AB 3059 programs; nor did the study attempt to identify all of the replicable features of AB 3059.

The study fell into the same trap which also caught most of the long-time subsidized providers who watched AB 3059: it focused on the AB 3059 center care and missed the real alternatives, the truly new directions. The extent to which discussion of the

center based programs dominated the attention of general child care providers is a good measure of the extent to which California's subsidized providers thought only of center care when they thought of child care. At the very least, AB 3059 has broadened our imagination.

The study did, however, measure the distance between child care in the 1970's and child care in 1945. Superintendent Simpson's remarks then no longer hold true: the quality of care delivered in public schools settings could be equaled in other settings.

Grace Day Home, Sacramento.

Summary

On the balance then, this quick review of AB 3059's intentions and delivery systems reveals several important successes. Family day care and the private child care sector have been included in large numbers in subsidized care in California. The Legislature as well as the Superintendent of Public Instruction have options for the expansion of care which are less costly than California's traditional general child care. Striking a balance between the State's large unmet need for care and everyone's desire to pay child care providers a professional wage will continue to challenge policy makers.

Child Care in 1980

In Senator Sieroty's SB 863, one finds implicit and explicit the Legislature's assessment of AB 3059 programs. Although the major force behind SB 863, at least in its initial versions, was the report of the Commission on Child Development issued in the fall of 1978, one cannot read the final version of the bill without appreciating the substantial impact which AB 3059 programs have upon it. There are, predictably, sections of SB 863 which reflect the success of the resource and referral programs and of the vendor payment (now called alternative payment) programs. However, in addition to attention within the bill to these two programs, SB 863 extends to all child development programs some of the policy features tested in AB 3059.

1. The first priority for enrollment in subsidized child care for all programs is now abused and neglected children. This priority for enrollment was a test feature of AB 3059.

2. The next priority for services to eligible families goes to those of lowest income, regardless of the family constellation--be it one parent or two parent--and regardless of the welfare status of the family. A family no longer needs to be on AFDC to receive second priority. This too was a feature of AB 3059. Its importance in California cannot be underrated: many families of very low income choose not to go on AFDC for personal and for cultural reasons. These families are now of equal priority with those who do choose to enter the welfare system.

3. SB 863, for at least 1980-81, establishes an adult-child ratio for preschool children of 1:8. This provision results from the Abt study comparing AB 3059 centers with other subsidized centers. This feature of SB 863 should stimulate a significant increase in the number of children served statewide as general child care programs move from 1:5 or 1:7 ratios to the ratio of 1:8. Although this ratio was not stipulated in AB 3059 programs, it tended to be the ratio which most programs chose to utilize.

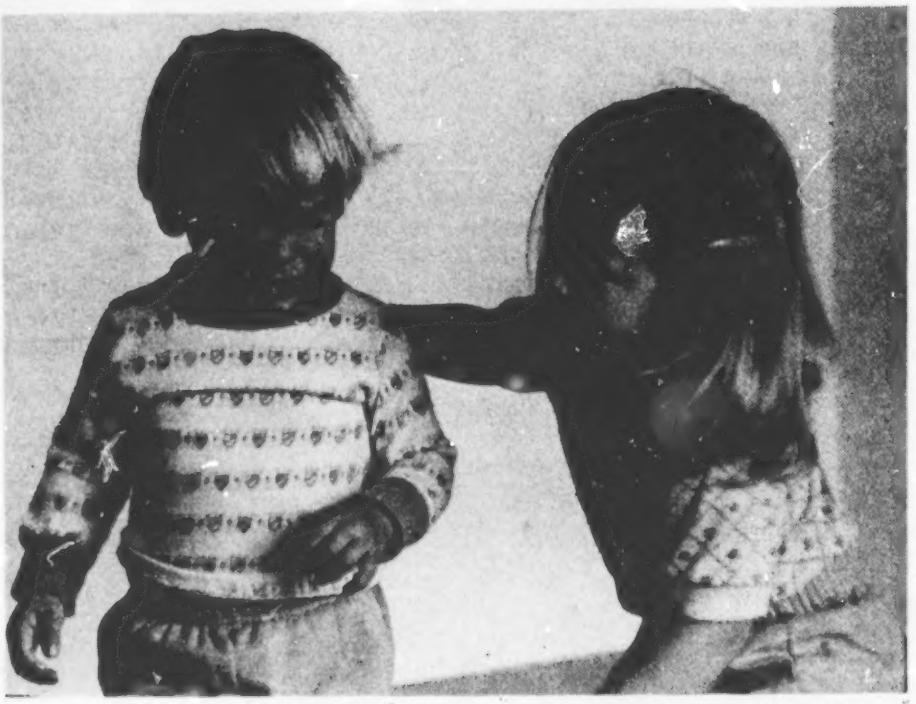
4. SB 863 permits agencies to meet children's health and social service needs through referrals to local generic agencies. This provision was originally part of AB 3059 as a cost reducing feature: the policy behind this regulation is that State dollars for day care should, as much as possible, pay for the basic child care, while other parts of the State budget, such as those for direct social services and health services, should serve those children eligible for those subsidized services.

5. SB 863 makes subsidized care more appealing to private proprietary programs by allowing them to continue their direct service contracts with the State, operate under Title 22 regulations, and collect from the State a fee which is equivalent to that they charged to full fee paying families. However, SB 863 recognizes that the Title 5 regulations should apply to all center based programs which enroll a majority of subsidized children. One of the goals of utilizing only Title 22 regulations, when attracting the proprietary sector, is to achieve economic integration of full fee paying and subsidized children.

6. SB 863 gives the Department of Education the authority to provide all subsidized child care programs with capital outlay assistance. This section of the bill, based in part upon the Department's experience with minor capital outlay grants under AB 3059, provides grants of up to $1,000 for family day care homes, revolving loans with no interest, and the State purchase of relocatable child care and development facilities for lease to qualifying contracting agencies.

7. Resource and referral programs are now recognized as a priority for every geographic area of the State. Through SB 863, these programs are also given a detailed set of responsibilities which have emerged from the successes of these original AB 3059 programs. SB 863, and through it the Legislature, see resource and referral programs as a service both to parents and to providers, assisting them to develop new and better programs of service for children.

8. Alternative payment programs (formerly the vendor/voucher program) now have similar set of responsibilities. Through SB 863, the alternative payment programs are a clear service alternative in which subsidies follow children instead of remaining with providers, in which services are available to every eligible member of the family rather than a child of one age group only, and through which special care arrangements such as weekend, evening, and split shift care are available to parents who qualify for subsidized child development services.



Humboldt Child Care Council, Eureka.

A general feature of SB 863 is the clarity with which the Legislature announces its intent to make subsidized child care available through many kinds of agencies: family day care, private proprietary, private nonprofit, community based, and public agencies are each singled out by the Legislature as appropriate avenues for delivery of child care services. The list of eligible types of agencies in SB 863 is nearly word for word that which was included in AB 3059. Legislative support for this wide range of applicant agencies suggests in one paragraph the distance State policy has come since the first days following the end of World War II.

There are other more subtle ways in which AB 3059 in its successful programs influenced the language and vision of SB 863. For example, SB 863 pays extensive attention to children who are abused and neglected and to children who are at risk of abuse and neglect. The primary vehicles through which respite day care services are envisioned for these children are resource and referral programs and alternative payment programs. These delivery systems are in turn to work closely with county departments of social services and with policy makers within the State's Department of Social Services. As our State Department of Social Services redesigns its service delivery structure with the stated goals of family reunification and of the prevention of child abuse and neglect, then the necessity of good resource and referral and good respite care will be essential. The work of the AB 3059 programs in this area and their adoption statewide by SB 863, prefigures some crucial aspects of the new Department of Social Services's Redesign.

Humboldt Child Care Council, Eureka.

the GAC: 80-81

With the completion of the Alternative Child Care Program, the Governor's Advisory Committee both looks back over these four years with pride in its close work with those programs to assure the successful testing of new ideas and looks forward to new projects. During 1980-81, the Committee activites will focus on these issues:

The Subcommittee on Legislation will follow the enactment of SB 863, in particular the drafting of regulations which deal with those program aspects spawned by AB 3059. The Subcommittee will also review and testify on the State Master Plan for Children and Youth, on the Redesign of State social services, and on proposed credentials for early childhood teachers. The Subcommittee also hopes to assist others in drafting legislation to provide for due process and for administrative hearings when day care agencies have unresolvable differences with the Department of Education.

The Special Needs Subcommittee will issue a second report on services to young children of migrant farmworkers. With the Commission on Teacher Preparation and Licensing, Subcommittee members will assist in designing a credential for teachers of young handicapped children; and, the Subcommittee hopes to hold a hearing on the special challenges of early childhood education for children from non-English-speaking homes.

The Subcommittee on Employer-Sponsored Child Care intends to develop a resource bank of materials for labor and for businesses who wish to pursue employer-sponsored care; promote at least two meetings through the Governor's Office for key people in business and in labor who can inform our offices of their need for assistance from State government as they enter this promising area of child care services; the drafting of issues papers on ways to promote parent involvement in employer-sponsored care, ways to evaluate different incentives for businesses interested in providing care for their employees, and an analysis of the challenges for program quality which industry based child care raises. In working on these crucial issues, we foresee an important part of the success being the extent to which we can work closely with others within the Governor's Office.

The Committee as a whole will also address two policy issues raised by its Task Force on Child Development Allocations: the need to establish or to identify local councils throughout the State which can set priorities for new and expanded child care services, and the review of policies governing the change in subsidized child care contracts when one agency wants to relinquish its contract to another.

To support the Committee's work, the office of the Executive Secretary will continue to serve the public as a source of information on child development services throughout the State, gather data on both needs and resources for child care on a county by county basis, provide testimony on children's services at budget and special hearings of the Legislature, review legislation on children's services, and participate in the State's Interagency Council on Children and Youth and other coordinating bodies.

In all of these activities, we foresee the extensive use of the Governor's Advisory Committee as a public forum for any and all persons in California to make comments on child development policies as they affect themselves, their children, or the children with whom they work. This is perhaps one of the most interesting unanticipated outcomes of the entire AB 3059 experiment: by giving to the Governor's Advisory Committee an important role in reviewing the successes of the AB 3059 programs and by providing new appointments to the Committee, the Legislature and the Governor initiated a process whereby child development policies do receive public review on a regular basis. The importance which many people give the meetings of the Governor's Advisory Committee reflects both the need for such public policy discussion and the success with which the Committee has realized its potential as a public forum. Through AB 3059, the Committee has discovered the importance of the role it can play in reviewing and suggesting directions for State policy.

In closing, we again salute the Governor, the Legislature, and the parents and providers who worked within the AB 3059 framework to provide the State a truly successful set of new directions in child development services.

Bookmobile visits children in San Luis's vendor program

Photo Credits.

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